

**Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Rhode Island**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, February 20, 2020

Used Car Dealer Indicted for Bank Fraud, Aggravated ID Theft

PROVIDENCE – A Massachusetts used car dealer was arraigned in U.S. District Court in Providence on Wednesday and ordered detained, charged by way of indictment with allegedly participating in a wide-reaching conspiracy to defraud financial institutions in several states by obtaining car loans secured with stolen personal identifying information and fraudulent documents.

It is alleged that Rolando E. Estrella, 32, of Dracut, Mass., conspired with others to defraud financial institutions in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and numerous other states across the country.

It is alleged in the indictment that the scam employed by Estrella and others involved the theft and use of individuals' personal identifying information to open bank accounts with major banks and smaller credit unions. Using that information along with counterfeited documents including automobile titles, Estrella and others applied for used car and truck loans which were then deposited into bank accounts opened in the "sellers'" names, after which the proceeds were quickly withdrawn.

Until recently, Estrella was the operator of Estrella National Auto, LLC, a used car dealership located in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

On December 17, 2019, an arrest warrant was issued for Estrella after a federal grand jury returned a ten-count indictment charging him with conspiracy to commit bank fraud, aggravated identity theft, fraudulent use of a Social Security number, and seven counts of bank fraud. He surrendered to the U.S. Marshals Service in Rhode Island on Wednesday and was arraigned before U.S. District Court Magistrate Judge Patricia A. Sullivan.

The indictment and arraignment of Estrella are announced by United States Attorney Aaron L. Weisman, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service Stephen Marks, and Scott E. Antolik, Special Agent in Charge of the Boston Field Office of the Social Security Administration, Office of the Inspector General/Office of Investigations.

An indictment is merely an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney William J. Ferland.

Estrella's arrest marks the latest in a series made by the Social Security Office of Inspector General and the United States Secret Service involving members of a fraud ring operating throughout the northeast United States.